



Poblenou 22@Barcelona
The district of innovation

Ajuntament  de Barcelona

Table of contents

1. Introduction ...	4
1.1. Two cases of good urban practices ...	5
1.2. Exceptional cases, things in common ...	7
 2. Poblenou, 22@Barcelona, “the district of innovation” ...	12
2.1. The place and its background ...	13
2.2. Objectives and key concepts / features ...	16
2.3. Results ...	20
2.4. Challenges for the future ...	25



Introduction

Barcelona. Two cases of good urban practices

Barcelona presents two cases of good urban practices that are encompassed within the thematic area of **Livable Cities**.

- Ciutat Vella. The historic centre of Barcelona.
- Poblenou-22@Barcelona. The district of innovation.

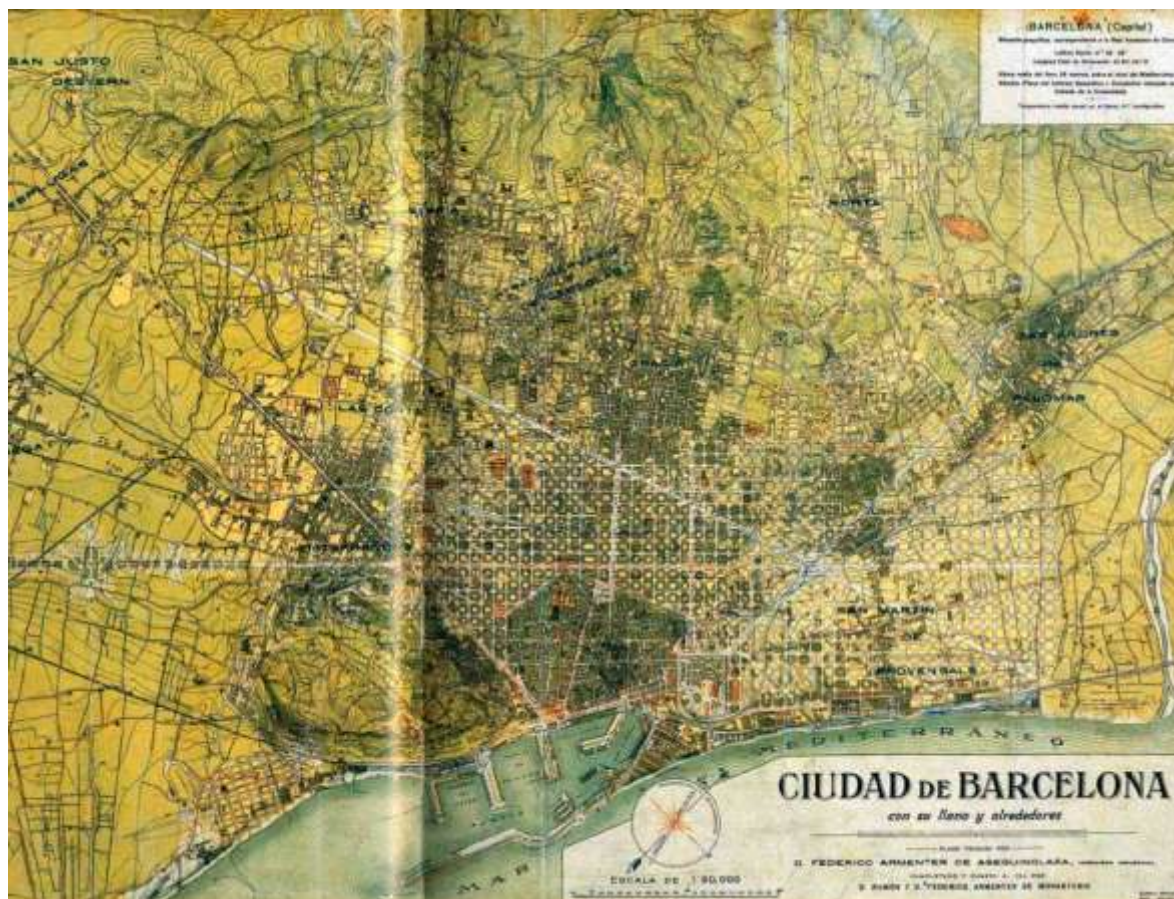
These two cases fulfil the characteristics necessary in order to opt for being exhibited in the Urban Best Practices Area of the Shanghai World Expo in 2010. They are two specific cases affecting territorial areas which are very well defined and easily identifiable within the city's fabric.

They constitute two transformation processes at a developmental stage in territories with a significant strategic value within the city and its metropolitan area: the historic centre, the city's real administrative, political, cultural and tourist centre, which is fighting to preserve its residential nature; and Barcelona's old industrial district par excellence, which aims to become part of the liveable city without losing its productive nature.

The action carried out in Ciutat Vella has arisen as a result of the extreme deterioration of the living conditions of its residents, while the Poblenou action forms part of the city's economic strategy. The two areas had been excluded from the city's dynamics, since the former had lost urban values while the latter had never attained them.

The two processes come together in the common objective of attaining the conditions that characterise liveable cities:

- An attractive setting that is respectful towards the environment.
- An economically viable urban model that enables people to be offered opportunities.
- A socially cohesive community.



Exceptional cases, things in common

The Ciutat Vella and Poblenou 22@ Projects share some of the features that make them exceptional:

Territorial area

Both are territorial areas with **very clear boundaries**, made up of morphologically **identifiable structures** within the city as a whole (Ciutat Vella is a mediaeval structure that stands out within Cerdà's *Eixample*, a grid-structured urban extension, while Poblenou forms part of this grid with very powerful boundaries).

Another common element is their **large surface area**. They are areas that carry significant weight in respect of the city's total surface area. The 9 km² surface area of the Poblenou area represents almost 10% of the city's surface area, while that of Ciutat Vella represents 5%. The transformation processes in each of them are of special merit and significance for this reason.

The two cases also constitute examples of how to intervene in **highly central territories** of the city with the aim of recovering or redefining their civic role.





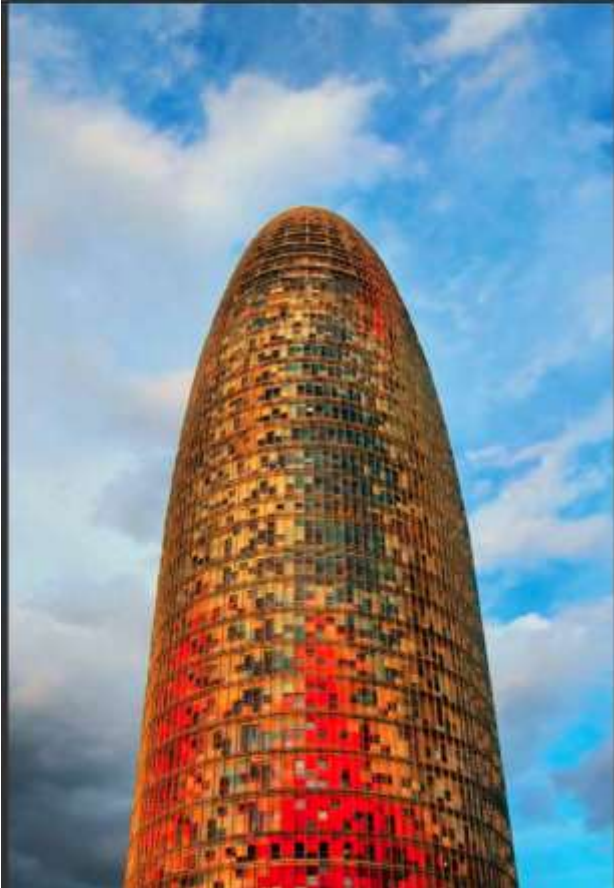
Strategic actions

The two interventions are included within the set of plans and projects being developed in Barcelona which have strategic value due to their capacity to influence the city's evolution in the medium and long term.

This set of actions, which is carried out by means of a range of instruments includes, amongst others, actions for the transformation of basically industrial structures, such as in the case of the Poblenou-22@ operation; structuring actions that aim to establish new urban links; the planning of large open spaces as elements for rebalancing the compact city; the refurbishment of facilities in districts; or the implementation of the Housing Plan.

In addition to constituting a basic element in Barcelona's economic strategy as the central city of the Metropolitan Region, the **Poblenou-22@Barcelona** operation is also a new city-making model and has led the way for large operations in the transformation of industrial land in the city of Barcelona.

The **Ciutat Vella** operation is an extreme and exceptional case within this group of strategic works due to its historic, cultural and political importance, as a catalyser of centrality.



Features of the process

The cases that Barcelona presents are long-term processes which are currently **at a developmental stage**. They make it possible to take stock of the results. They have a significant background and stretch into the future following their own logic of development.

Another element they have in common is that they are examples of how to **manage urban complexity**, the pinnacle of urban development in the 21st century. The complexity partly stems from the clustering in the same territory of a variety of urban systems that sometimes lack coherence in respect of each other and may generate conflicts. The management of urban complexity requires the use of a series of instruments regarding urban development, social action, economic and cultural measures, etc.

The two operations are led by the public sector in conjunction with the collaboration of private initiative. They also have a **specific management body**, a public or joint venture with the private sector, in order to promote and coordinate the various kinds of actions.



Correspondence to Barcelona's general strategy

Both cases are prime examples of the city's general development strategy, which pursues the improvement of its citizens' quality of life and which has adopted the following values as action criteria:

- **A compact and dense city.** An efficient city with a large range of uses and urban functions in a small space, which reduces necessary mobility and encourages social cohesion while guaranteeing greater efficiency in the management of the territory.
- **A Mediterranean city.** A city paradigm for strolling and coexisting, which pays special attention to public spaces, the meeting points par excellence where city life takes place.
- **A complex city** that opts for a whole range of uses as opposed to specialisation. A city in which to live, work and enjoy oneself. Also complex from a morphological and sociological point of view.
- **A sustainable city.** A city that is developed according to sustainable mobility criteria, which incorporates energy-saving measures and which is concerned with reducing pollution.
- **A productive and innovative city.** A city which fosters economic activity as a factor with a bearing on the improvement of people's quality of life and which opts for technology and the creative economy.
- **A city of integration.** A city that searches for its identity, cohesion. An open city that is concerned with the creation of new epicentres for culture and social relations.





Presentation

For more than a century, Poblenou was Barcelona's main industrial engine. The 22@Barcelona Plan is transforming this old industrial area and working-class district in accordance with a new model based on the knowledge economy.

The Plan is committed to a compact, diverse and balanced city model in which production, training and research spaces coexist with a wide residential and retail offer, along with new cultural and civic centrality projects.

2.1. The place and its background

The new 22@ district is located in the east zone of the city of Barcelona (Spain). The general area of action encompasses a rectangular space of some 900 ha delimited by the Gran Vía road, the restored seafront, Ciutadella Park and the River Besòs. The central action known as the **22@Barcelona plan** represents an urban development intervention in an area of 200 ha that basically coincides with the old district of Poblenou.

For more than 150 years, Poblenou was Barcelona's industrial district and was identified with this activity to such an extent that it was labelled the "*Manchester of Catalonia*" at the end of the 19th century. The economic dynamism of this sector decreased in the last third of the 20th century as a result of factories moving to specialised sectors outside the city. The reduction in industrial activity led to the progressive abandonment and deterioration of the entire sector where the few existing dwellings still coexisted with irritating factories in a dilapidated urban setting lacking in proper facilities. Poblenou was also an isolated district, poorly connected to the city centre and with its back to the sea due to the layout of the railway.

The important infrastructure works carried out for the 1992 Olympic Games, the moving of the railway line, the construction of the coastal ring road and the recovery of the seafront laid the foundations for the transformation of the sector. The extension of Diagonal Avenue, the city's emblematic thoroughfare that crosses the entire sector, made it possible to incorporate Poblenou once and for all within the dynamics of the city. The sector was then subjected to strong pressure in order to force it to become a residential area, given its highly central position in the city.



The Poblenou project, 22@Barcelona, which got underway in 2000, represents a point of inflection in the transformation process of the sector. The project envisages the transformation of industrial areas into a district built on new economic activities based on technology, innovation and creativity, in line with a compact city model that makes residential use compatible with the new productive activity of the knowledge society and the creative economy.

Today, Poblenou is a district that enjoys an unbeatable urban position, including the refurbished seafront for civic use, and is crossed by the civic hub of Diagonal Avenue, at either end of which operations of great centrality are being carried out: Glòries Square and the new facilities and public spaces of the Forum area, a complex developed with state-of-the-art urban technology services and infrastructures, which provide citizens with new leisure and cultural spaces.

The renewal process of Poblenou's industrial areas, currently at a developmental stage, cannot be disassociated from other structural operations being carried out in the east of the city, such as the transformation of the Sant Andreu-Sagrera railway corridor (which will house the new high-speed train station), the aforementioned Glòries Square and the environmental recovery of the River Besòs.



2.2. Objectives and key concepts

Amongst the main values that have made the 22@Barcelona plan a liveable city model, the following stand out:

- The economic reactivation of the district on the basis of the transformation of its productive structure, turning a textile manufacturing industry into an industry based on knowledge and talent. This new industry is non-polluting and is developed with the compatibility of residential use, creating a new centrality in the city of Barcelona.
- The promotion of mixed uses in the district in order to guarantee its activity and life over the course of the entire day, fostering pleasant and safe environments.
- The creation and improvement of new public spaces in order to facilitate their coexistence and their use by all citizens (widening of pavements, removal of physical barriers, new cultural and social centres, new conference centre, etc.).
- The protection and recovery of elements of industrial heritage (factories, passageways, warehouses, workers' residences, urban stretch), which are earmarked for new uses (industry, training, residence, artistic and cultural production, etc.).
- The constant concern for the materialisation of sustainable proposals that facilitate efficiency and energy saving, as well as improving citizens' life (urban mobility, the establishment of recycling plants, centralised heating and cooling systems for housing complexes, the use of rainwater tanks, etc.).
- The redevelopment of public spaces with a higher standard of services and with the incorporation of efficiency criteria, technology applied to the design of urban infrastructures and sustainable mobility.
- The improvement of the connections of the Poblenou district to the rest of the city of Barcelona, removing the barriers that previously made it an isolated zone. Amongst the most noteworthy comprehensive urban actions of the entire project is the connection of Diagonal Avenue to the sea, a hub of great





importance in terms of its capacity to transform and provide structure, which has culminated in the recovery of the seafront and beaches as spaces open to the sea and respectful towards their setting.

- The adaptation and renovation of the city by bringing a fresh look to Cerdà's city block project.
- The use of innovative urban planning, which rather than predetermine a definitive form for a district has regulated a transformation process.
- Barcelona City Council's collaboration with other public or private bodies and institutions has led to it being acknowledged as a model of institutional and business collaboration.



2.3. The results

The 22@Barcelona project has a potential gross floor area of 4,000,000 m², of which 1,382,644 m² have already been built or for which a building licence has been granted. 3,200,000 m² are earmarked for productive activities with 800,000 m² for other uses. Of the latter, 400,000 m² will be for public facilities and 114,000 m² for green zones.

The total infrastructure investment is expected to reach a figure of €180,000,000. In 2007 a total of €75,000,000 has been invested, which represents almost 42% of the total investment. Amongst other aspects, the plan includes the redevelopment of 37 km of streets, of which 14 km have already been completed, along with a 29 km bicycle lane.

The aim is to create 4,000 new subsidised dwellings in the district, of which 1,316 apartments are currently being built or have been approved for construction. In addition to this, 4,600 dwellings already exist within the former industrial areas. As such, a successful balanced combination of productive activity and residential activity would be achieved in the Poblenou district.

As regards the recovery of industrial heritage, the Modification of the Industrial Heritage Catalogue of Barcelona guarantees the preservation of 114 elements in Poblenou.









At the end of 2007, there are a total of 925 companies installed in Poble Nou, of which 47.01% are start-ups and 50% belong to the district's strategic sectors (Media, ICT, Medical Technology and energies). They already employ more than 33,000 of the 150,000 workers envisaged on completion of the plan. This population will increase with the arrival of 30,700 university students who will come to the district to do their degrees.

The Digital District, a project set up by 22@Barcelona in conjunction with the Sant Martí District, is aimed at the district's citizens as a whole in order to facilitate coexistence and collaboration between agents of all areas. Its actions include the setting up of the Network of multimedia classrooms, already used by more than 1500 users, or the Virtual memory programme, which has recorded the testimony of 75 elderly people and in which 350 students have taken part.





2.4. Challenges for the future

In order to consolidate the 22@Barcelona project definitively, Barcelona City Council aims to meet the following challenges:

- To provide the Poblenou district with a new centrality within the city of Barcelona, as a district of innovation that is attractive both for residents and economic competitiveness.
- To attain an impact of 15% on Barcelona's total productivity.
- To draw together the set of new actions in the Poblenou district with those that already exist.
- To consolidate the *clusters 22@* model (Media, ITC, Medical Technologies and Energy) by attracting and clustering scientific-technological companies and institutions.
- To provide the district with specific spaces for innovative small and medium-sized enterprises, to implement a landing platform for international companies and entrepreneurs, to promote spaces for creative and design-oriented companies, and to build more university halls of residence for researchers.
- To extend social housing significantly, to create more public spaces and green zones, to implement a mobility and public transport plan, to provide facilities, services and spaces for cultural creation and dissemination.

Poblenou 22@Barcelona
El distrito de la innovación

